

# Al-Huda Academy Sheffield



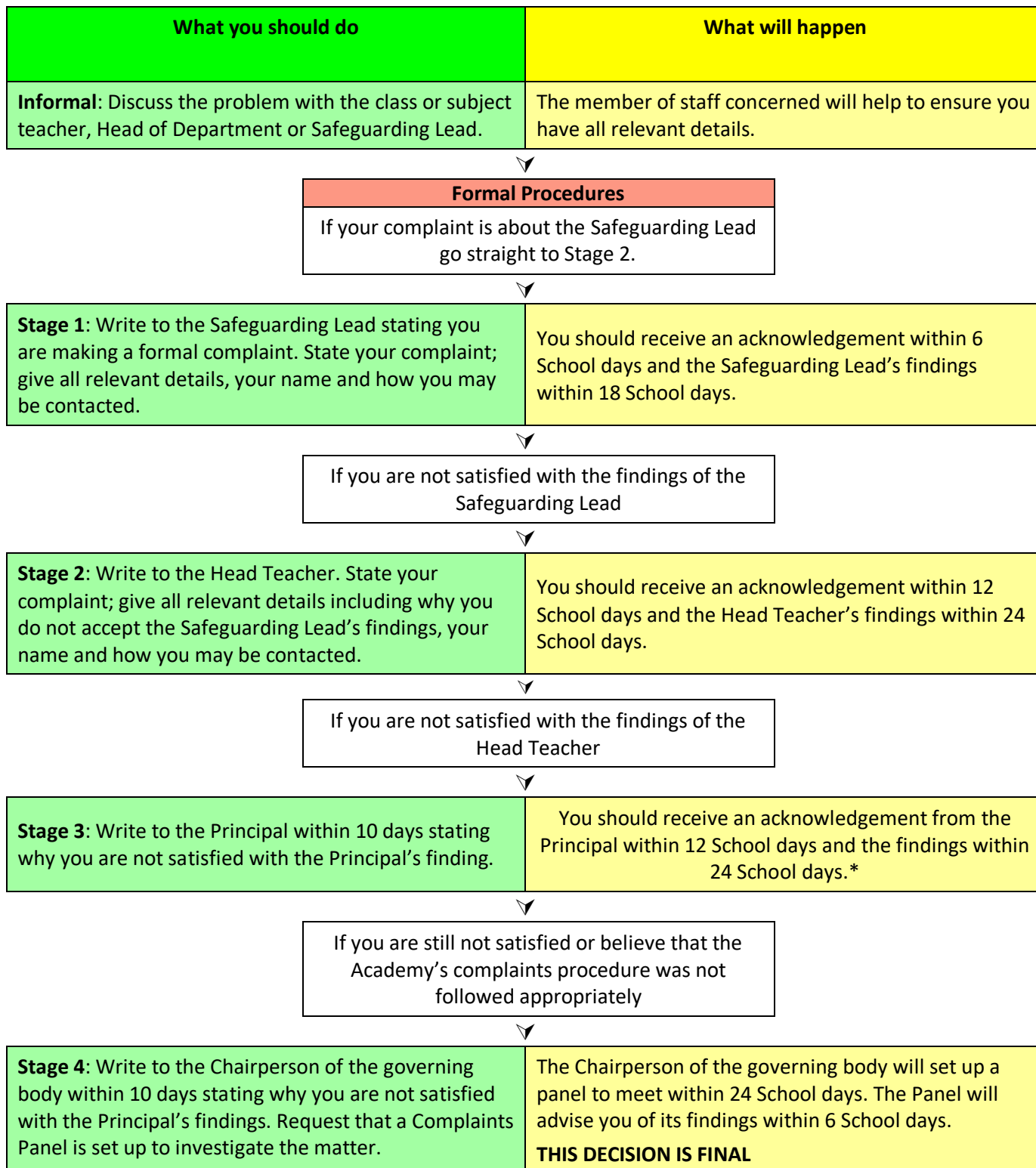
## Parents' Complaint Procedure

**Date:** November 2017

**Review Date:** November 2019

## A summary of the stages in Al-Huda Academies complaints procedure

The diagram below provides a summary of the procedures detailed in this booklet. Because this is only a summary you are advised to ensure you have read the relevant section of the guidance in detail before starting out on any of the stages. Please remember that it is normal and expected that each stage will be followed in sequence. It is also expected that there will be good reason to move on to the next stage in the procedures.



\* These timescales are advisory only in recognition of the voluntary nature of the work of the Principal.

## How to make a complaint about Academy

### **What is this booklet for?**

Things do not always happen as you might expect. You may have a disagreement with the way your child is being educated or supervised whilst at the Academy. This booklet explains how you can solve your concerns as quickly and effectively as possible. It can also help you if you want to make a formal complaint about an unresolved issue.

### **I have a complaint about Academy**

#### **Who can complain?**

Anyone with parental responsibility for a pupil at the Academy can complain if they are not satisfied with the service they receive.

From time to time other people may have a complaint about Academy. In this case, it is best to contact the Safeguarding Lead first, as he will almost always be able to deal with the problem. However, everyone is entitled to have his or her complaint heard as detailed below.

#### **I have a complaint, what should I do first?**

Before making a complaint, check the details of the cause of your concern with either your child's class or subject teacher. This can often resolve the problem.

You may wish to take your concern straight to the Safeguarding Lead he may ask if you have talked to the relevant teacher, and may want you to arrange a meeting to do that. The main priority is to resolve the matter quickly and calmly. It is likely that a problem will become more difficult to solve as more people become involved. Try to involve just the people who you feel may help to solve the problem.

If you are uncertain how to present your concern you can ask one of the Academy senior managers for advice. They can only offer general advice.

#### **I still can't resolve my concern. What should I do next?**

The issue will now become a formal complaint.

- At this level it is important that everyone involved is clear about the procedures and the nature of the complaint, so you should make important points in writing.
- There are four possible stages to the formal complaints process, with a view to solving problems at the earliest possible stage.
- With the exception of a complaint against a Safeguarding Lead when you should start at Stage 2), you should complete one stage before moving to the next.

## The Formal Complaints Procedure

### Stage 1

Write to the Safeguarding Lead saying that you are making a formal complaint. Say what your complaint is, with all relevant details, your name and how you can be contacted. If your complaint is about the Safeguarding Lead go straight to Stage 2.

The Safeguarding Lead should acknowledge your letter within 6 School days<sup>1</sup>. He will look into your complaint and decide the best way of solving the problem. Hopefully you will be able to accept the Safeguarding Lead's guidance.

If this does not resolve your complaint, or if the Safeguarding Lead has not offered a way forward within 18 school days of your writing to the Academy, you should go to Stage 2 of this procedure.

### Stage 2

If Stage 1 of the complaints procedure did not solve the problem or if the Safeguarding Lead did not respond, or if your complaint is about the Safeguarding Lead, you should do the following:

Write to the Head Teacher. The Academy will advise you how to contact her. Include in your letter all relevant details about your complaint, why (if relevant) you are dissatisfied with the Safeguarding Lead's findings, your name and how you may be contacted. If it is more convenient, you can include copies of any previous letters about the problem.

Your letter must be acknowledged within 12 School days<sup>2</sup>.

The Head Teacher will speak with everyone involved and will give you a written reply to your complaint within 24 School days<sup>2</sup>.

In the unlikely circumstance that Stage 2 does not provide a result that you can agree to, you should consider the next Stage.

### Stage 3

If Stage 2 did not give a satisfactory result or if your complaint is about the Head Teacher, you can write to the Principal. Include in your letter all relevant details about your complaint, why (if relevant) you are dissatisfied with the Head Teacher's findings, your name and how you may be contacted. If it is more convenient, you can include copies of any previous letters about the problem.

Your letter must be acknowledged within 12 School days.

It is likely that the Principal will be using the Academy address as her point of contact, so make sure you seal your envelope and mark it "**Urgent and Confidential**".

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<sup>1</sup> A letter sent close to the start of a school holiday may not be dealt with until Academy re-opens.

<sup>2</sup> A letter sent close to the start of a school holiday may not be dealt with by the Head Teacher until Academy re-opens.

The Principal will give you a written reply to your complaint within 24 School days. He should be aiming for a solution that everyone is happy with.

#### **Stage 4**

If you are not satisfied with the Principal's findings or have evidence that your complaint was not handled fairly according to the Academy's complaints procedure, you can write to the Chairperson of the Madni Trust. In your letter you must explain your complaint, confirming that each stage of the Academy's complaints procedure has been completed or giving evidence that shows the Academy did not follow the procedure and ask that a Complaints Panel is set up to consider your case. The complainant(s) can attend the Panel hearing and, if they wish, be accompanied.

The Panel will be made up of three members who have not been directly involved in the matters detailed in the complaint office and one of them will be independent from the management and the running of the Academy. The Chairperson of Madni Trust will arrange for the Panel to meet no later than 24 School days after this request. During this 16-day period the following should happen:

- The Academy will give you and the panel copies of all papers about the complaint. You can provide extra written material if you wish by sending a copy to the Chair of the Complaints Panel, c/o the Academy, with a copy to the Principal.
- The Panel will question everyone involved until they are satisfied that they have all the information they need.
- The Panel must be fair and can take any action they wish to ensure fairness.
- Advisers or officers called to the Panel to answer factual questions are not allowed to take part in the decision.
- Sometimes the Panel may realise that they need further information that is not available straight away. They can then agree to halt the meeting and meet again at another time. The Panel must try to deal with the complaint as quickly as possible.
- The Panel will reach its decision privately and will either support the earlier decision of the Chairperson of Madni Trust (Stage 3) or decide something different.
- You must be told what the decision is within 6 School days. The complainant, the Head teacher, Principal, Chairperson and, where relevant, the person complained about, should be given a copy of any findings and recommendations.

**The decision of this Panel is FINAL and binding on all parties.**

## General Issues

**Anonymous complaints:** Anonymous complaints cannot be dealt with by the formal procedure detailed in this booklet.

**Confidentiality:** All complaints, related correspondences, statements and records of complaints are to be kept confidential.

**Lobbying:** No one should lobby or put pressure on a person responsible for investigating a complaint. The investigating officer and/or panel may count this against you.

**Special circumstances:** At times it may be necessary to change the way a complaint is dealt with. This could be because of the nature of the original complaint or because additional information comes to light. Other ways of dealing with a complaint include:

- staff disciplinary action
- criminal investigation
- child protection investigation

### **Withdrawal of complaints**

You may withdraw your complaint at any time. If possible, you should write to the person who was last dealing with the matter. You will then be sent a written acknowledgement of the withdrawal of the complaint.

### **Record Keeping**

All written records will be kept of all complaints, whether they were resolved at the preliminary stage, or whether they proceeded to a panel hearing.

### **Useful Addresses:**

Chairperson  
The Madni Trust  
Forest House, Berkeley Avenue,  
Mapperley Park,  
Nottingham, NG3 5TT

### **Monitoring and Review**

This policy is regularly monitored by the Principal/Senior Management to ensure that it is working as effectively as possible.



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## Complaints Log Sheet

Academic Year	No. of Complaints
2014-15	
2015-16	
2016-17	